

CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY, 21 JUNE 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Colin Rayner, Dr Lilly Evans, Mohammed Ilyas, Eileen Quick, Gerry Clark, Paul Brimacombe and David Evans

Also in attendance: Cllr D Evans

Officers: Rob Stubbs, Russell O'Keefe and David Cook

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

Resolved unanimously: that Councillor C Rayner be elected as Chairman and Councillor Burbage be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the 2018-19 municipal year.

It was noted that Panel Members in attendance had not been whipped on the vote.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the Lead Member for Finance.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

MINUTES

Resolve unanimously: that the Part I minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2018 be approved as a true and correct record.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2017/18

The Panel considered the Annual Performance Report 2017/18 which summarised the performance towards the council's six strategic objectives in the 2017/18 municipal year and a summary of key projects. The report was due to be considered by Cabinet prior to going to Council.

The Executive Director informed the Panel that 17 (68%) of the key performance indicators met or exceeded target, whilst six (24%) were just short. Two of the targets (8%) were off target. The Panel were informed that the results showed high performance against stretched targets but there was still room for improvement.

The performance report also highlighted a number of key projects that had been completed throughout the year this included delivering services differently via Optalis and Achieving for Children, repairing 4,660 potholes, appointing Countryside as a joint venture partner, phase one of the Maidenhead Waterways project and a £30 million secondary school expansion programme. More projects were planned such as regeneration, new CCTV and car parks.

Cllr Brimacombe highlighted that the report contained some important messages to our residents but the very small text made it difficult to read. He also mentioned that although the report showed how many pot holes had been filled it did not say out of how many reported.

Cllr Quick mentioned that the Highways O&S Panel had also raised this point as well as concern regarding the percentage of children aged 2 to 2.5 years of age who had received a review. The Panel were informed that all children in the age group were offered a review but not all offers had been taken up, improving performance was a focus of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Chairman mentioned that although we could not make review compulsory they could be vulnerable children not being seen.

The Chairman also asked if there was anything highlighted within the report where poor performance could put our residents at risk or areas that required additional funding. The Panel were informed that underperformance would be reviewed but there was nothing that represented a risk to our residents wellbeing.

Cllr Brimacombe asked if there was still a backlog in processing planning applications and was informed that performance was better than it has ever been. There had been an increase in the number of application and we could not process 100% on time.

Resolved unanimously: that the Corporate Services O&S Panel considered the Cabinet report and unanimously endorsed the recommendations. The Panel felt that more contextual detail should be added to the report for the key performance indicators, that with regards to those children not being given a review at ages 2 to 2.5 that Cabinet is aware that there may be safeguarding issues, the Panel were informed that there were no issues with performance that would put vulnerable children or adults at risk and that Cabinet should be proactive in getting the message to our resident that we are using stretched targets and performance is above the national average.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Head of Finance introduce the Financial Update report that was the first statement of 2018-19 and confirmed a projected balanced budget.

The Panel were informed that there was a projected overspend of £564k with General Fund reserves of £7.001m and a Capital Fund of £1.729m. the minimum level of reserves agreed at Council in February 2018 was £5.86m.

There had been a mitigation exercise to bring spend back into line, but pressures remain in:

- Revs and Bens
- Bus subsidies
- Children's services

It was expected to see similar pressures coming through in the coming months. Substantial amount of work was ongoing for officers working on these pressures and this would be reported more fully in future Cabinet updates.

Report recommends to Cabinet to note the report and approve several additional grant funded budgets.

Cllr L Evans asked if a possible delay in the Borough Local Plan was included in this report and was informed that it would not be unless there was an impact on large capital projects that would be shown as being slipped.

Cllr Brimacombe mentioned that at paragraph 4.6 it showed that £1,210,980 from the MHCLG has been awarded to the Borough for help with homelessness. He asked if there had been an underspend on this the previous year and if the funding was linked to the homelessness strategy that was due out this autumn. The Panel were informed that last year's funding had

been fully utilised and it was expected that this year's allocation would also be used. The funds were to help prevent homelessness as well as helping those who were homeless and the funds were ring-fenced.

Cllr Brimacombe asked if there was going to be any additional increase in borrowing and was informed that there were no plans for 2018/19.

The Chairman mentioned that a resident had raised concerns about the quality of pot hole repairs. The Head of Finance said that the quality of repairs would be covered by the contract we have with our contractors and action could be taken if they were not fulfilling their obligations.

Cllr Quick reported that a contractor had informed her that they filled pot holes but no longer 'tapped' the material down as this would be done by traffic.

Cllr Brimacombe also raised concerns about utility companies not repairing the road correctly after repairs and was informed that they were obliged to repair to the same standard they found the road.

In response to a question from the Chairman the Panel were informed that there still remained a concern with regards to pressure in Children's Services and Adult Social Care.

Resolved unanimously: that Corporate Services O&S Panel considered the Cabinet report and unanimously endorsed the recommendations. The Panel asked for additional information regarding the quality of pot hole repairs and if any action can be taken against utility companies doing poor repairs. The Panel also asked for clarification on the revenue budget for flexible homeless support; how the money was used and if it was linked to the upcoming homelessness report.

VICUS WAY CAR PARK

The Lead Member for Maidenhead Regeneration introduced the Cabinet report that sought approval for the construction of a new car park at Vicus Way, Maidenhead, creating 513 permanent car parking spaces for the use by local business, residents and commuters.

The Panel were informed that if approved the report would go to Council and if approved Council a new car park in Maidenhead would be completed by 2020. He added the car park was a central piece in a jigsaw to deliver more parking in the Town Centre of Maidenhead as promised.

The Lead Member informed that on the 26 September 2017 Council agreed a budget of £12,344,600 for the construction of new temporary and permanent parking provision across the Borough in line with the emerging parking plan. Delegated authority was provided to the executive director and Lead Member to finalise the parking plan and carry out procurement for temporary and permanent parking provision.

During the period September 17 to date several options and locations had been explored for the provision of car parking, including exploration on provision of additional permanent car parking, and reduction of the expenditure on temporary car parking, which did not deliver value for money. The option for permanent car parking provision at Vicus Way, meant the Council could reduce its planned expenditure on temporary parking, and provide good value for money by investing capital in a permanent public parking solution for the long term benefit of residents, visitors, commuters and businesses, in addition to delivering a financial return to the Council.

The Lead Member stated he expected work to begin in the last quarter of 2018 and for the car park to be completed by January 2020. The project could achieve about 10% savings if it went to open procurement but this would come at the cost of a 12 month delay. A planning application would be submitted for Broadway car park which would follow the completion of Vicus Way car park. Broadway car park and Vicus Way car park would give the Borough substantially more parking in the centre of Maidenhead. He had ensured at no point would there be a reduction in parking during the redevelopment of Maidenhead and the proposals in the report made sure that happened.

The Chairman mentioned that the proposed scheme needed to be of high quality and that he was not in favour of the two story car park being proposed for central Windsor.

The Lead Member also informed that the report contained as an appendix the risk register and governance arrangements.

Cllr L Evans mentioned that there had been a press release already about the site and asked if a planning application had been submitted. The Panel were informed that the press release was regarding engaging with the public and that a planning application would be submitted after Council approval of the report.

Cllr Brimacombe raised concern about the proposed governance arrangements shown as they did not confirm to Prince II standards and guidance, he would like to have seen which methodology they were following. Cllr Brimacombe also asked if disabled parking spaces and family spaces would be provided at the correct size.

In response the Panel were informed that there would be DDA compliant spaces and that the project management methodology used was the RIBA Plan of Work which has been the industry standard process for the building design and construction process. Cllr Brimacombe was still concern about what was being shown especially as there was no tension built into the project methodology shown. The Panel were informed that a report was due to be presented to the Council's Audit and Performance Review Panel regarding project management arrangements.

The Chairman asked if we had allowed for future proofing the project for example an increase in electric cars. The Panel were informed that there would be a small number of charging points at the start but the infrastructure would allow for this to be expanded upon as and when required.

Cllr Quick mentioned that there were a lot of acronyms in the report that needed a key.

Cllr Brimacombe mentioned that it was important that the consultants consider traffic flow along the road especially at the Homebase exit.

Resolve unanimously: that the Corporate Services O&S Panel considered the Cabinet report and unanimously endorsed the recommendations. Concern was raised about the project methodology being used but the Panel welcomed the project and felt that it was being undertaken at the right time, in the right place and would help reduce town centre traffic.

(Cllr L Evans left the meeting)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion takes place on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 7.45 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....